

to help during the pandemic and for Americans who worked from home to help slow the virus's spread.

It is unfortunate that opposition from a handful of States with aggressive taxation policies—like the Senate Democratic leader's home State of New York—has so far prevented legislation like mine from getting through Congress. But I will continue to fight for tax relief for remote and mobile workers.

It has been a difficult year for our country. There are way too many virus infections, way too many hospitalizations, way too many people who have lost loved ones from this dreaded virus. It has affected people in so many ways—their health, their confidence, their economic standing and status, their mental health. There are just so many—so many—effects of this, and this winter is likely to be very challenging.

But the encouraging news is that there is light at the end of the tunnel. There is a vaccine out there that will get more widely out there, and thanks to the resources that we put into the first coronavirus bill—the CARES Act that passed last March—those vaccines have been moving forward at record speed—five times faster than any vaccine in history.

Light is at the end of the tunnel. The vaccines are coming. They are going to be proven to be very effective, and there is additional funding in this particular legislation that we will vote on today to make sure that it gets distributed as quickly as possible.

We are going to make it through this, and I look forward to sending the additional relief that is included in this legislation that we will move through the Senate today and put on the President's desk, where he can sign it into law. I look forward to seeing that additional relief get out to the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BARRASSO). The Senator from North Carolina.

HONORING JASON SHUPING

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the life and service of Concord, NC, Police Officer Jason Shuping, who was tragically killed in the line of duty this week.

Officer Shuping was only 25 years old and had served the Concord Police Department for 1½ years with honor and distinction.

Officer Shuping and Officer Kaleb Robinson were responding to a 9-1-1 call for a car crash and an attempted carjacking. Officers Shuping and Robinson located the suspect and were prepared to bring him to justice. However, when Officer Shuping, Officer Robinson, and a third ALE officer approached, the suspect immediately began opening fire.

Officers Shuping and Robinson were both shot. Additional officers arrived on the scene and took out the suspect.

While Officer Robinson is, fortunately, expected to make a recovery, Officer Shuping, tragically, passed away from his injuries.

Jason Shuping was an outstanding police officer who courageously ran to danger to protect residents of Concord.

He was also a loving son and a husband to his wife Haylee. He was active in his community since his childhood. He attended East Rowan High School in Salisbury, and he was an honor student and track and field athlete at UNC-Pembroke.

He was a young man with a bright future ahead of him, described by those who knew him as a "gentle soul who made an impact."

His hometown paper, the Salisbury Post, noted: "Whether it was staying after practice to provide coaching to a youngster or coming back home from college to play the handbell in his church's ensemble, you could always count on Jason Shuping."

It is no surprise to see the outpouring of love coming from the community of Concord to honor his life and service. There have been a candlelight vigil and a touching law enforcement escort that brought many residents and a long line of American flags proudly displayed.

As we gather with our families this Christmas, my thoughts and prayers will be with the family of Officer Shuping, as well as the families of Mount Holly Police Officer Tyler Hernon and Nash County Deputy Sheriff Jared Allison, who also lost their lives this month in the line of duty.

Those families are going through an unimaginable period of grief, but they should know that the people of North Carolina are forever grateful for the selfless service of their loved ones, and I will never forget the ultimate sacrifice that they made in answering the call to protect others.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

CORONAVIRUS

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today to thank all of my colleagues who worked so hard on the bill that is coming to the floor today, the pandemic relief package.

We know all the top priorities in there—the vaccine distribution—and I want to thank Senator SCHUMER and leaders and those on both sides of the aisle who put more funding into that.

I want to thank the group who has worked so hard on this agreement and this negotiation in the Senate for their work, including Senator MANCHIN and Senator ROMNEY and Senator WARNER and Senator SHAHEEN and Senator HASSAN and Senator DURBIN, as well as all of their Republican colleagues, Senator COLLINS and Senator MURKOWSKI, Senator CASSIDY, who worked so hard on this original agreement, with many others who joined in as well.

This bill contains such important priorities, including unemployment

and help for our hospitals and help for our rural areas—housing, rent, small businesses, unemployment, the direct checks.

I think we all know that there is more work to be done, including next year, including for our cities and our States, but it is so important that we get this done by the end of the year.

I wanted to focus on something that I have worked on for quite a while with Senator CORNYN from Texas. We have done this on a bipartisan basis from the beginning, and it is the Save Our Stages Act.

When we first introduced it in July, we knew that it was going to be a long road, and we also knew that the only way we would get this done is by sticking together as a team and by working with other Members of Congress from red and blue States. And by the end—this bill is included in full in this package—we had 57 Senators who sponsored this bill out of 100, with many more supporting it. We had over 200 House Members.

We worked so hard to make this about America and American music and American theater and American culture.

We all know that you can't go stand in a mosh pit in the middle of a pandemic. These live entertainment venues were among the first businesses to close, and they will almost certainly be among the last to reopen.

This was about, yes, Nashville and New York, but it was just as much about the Fargo Theater or a small, small country music venue in Texas. And while we see the light at the end of tunnel with the vaccines, we know that it will be quite a while before these businesses, which operate on such thin margins as it is, can keep going.

I think we also know the importance of the arts and music, not only as a cultural icon in America but also as an economic driver. It is one of our No. 1 exports, when you combine all of it. And the fact that we were able to stick together with not only the nitty-gritty of this bill and this coalition and actually add partners as we went along is a tribute to all the musicians out there, all the venues, all the lighting operators, all the truckers—everyone who came together and said: We are going to get this done.

I know when Senator CORNYN and I first introduced this, people kind of patted us on the head and said: Oh, this sounds nice. But I think when people started to hear the facts and how much this matters to economies and even small towns, it made a difference. In the end, to quote Minnesota's own Bob Dylan from "The Times They Are a-Changin'," he says:

Come senators, congressmen
Please heed the call
Don't stand in the doorway
Don't block the hall

No one blocked the hall.

I want to thank my colleagues, and I want to especially thank Senator CORNYN. We have led many bills together, and we had to go back and forth a lot.

I want to thank Dayna Frank, who is the head of First Avenue in Minnesota, made famous, of course, by Prince.

Prince wouldn't be Prince if not for First Avenue. Everyone in our State, when they think about First Avenue, they think about Prince.

She is the head of the National Venue Association. She called me one night in the beginning of the pandemic and said: I just can't make it through this without some help.

They already received PPP loans, but that is not enough for these venues because of the unique circumstance where they can't partially open. You can't go to a theater right now and sit elbow-to-elbow with your friends and family.

I also want to thank my legislative director, Doug Calidas, who has worked on this from the beginning, including all the last month's late-night negotiations. He did a wonderful job.

I want to thank Senators SCHUMER and MCCONNELL and Representatives Speaker PELOSI and Leader MCCARTHY for getting this over the finish line—Senator MCCONNELL for putting it in his original bill and Senator SCHUMER, who cares so much about this because of all of the great music and acts and everything coming out of New York State. It was certainly very, very helpful—and that would put it mildly—to have Senator SCHUMER in the room where it happened, where the last negotiations were made.

I also want to thank Senators SHAHEEN and COLLINS, who worked on this in the original negotiation; Senators CARDIN and RUBIO with the Small Business Committee, who made this a priority; and finally, our House authors, our bipartisan House authors out there, Representatives WELCH and WILLIAMS, for their work.

So how this works—the Small Business Administration will create a new \$15 billion grant program to help venues cover 6 months of expenses and make it through this pandemic. We are very hopeful that once the summer comes, we are going to see more and more openings because of the vaccine, because of what I hope will be, with a new administration, an increased emphasis on testing, and that we will see more and more venues able to open.

The grants can be used to cover all the major costs the venues have to pay to stay in business, including rent and mortgage, utilities, employee wages, key benefits, maintenance costs, State and local taxes, payments to contractors, and purchases of protective equipment.

Venues that are at the greatest risk of closing—sadly, we have already lost a number of our venues—will have priority access to the majority of the grant funding. All venues will be able to apply within 4 weeks of the program's launch with the Small Business Administration, but in the first 2 weeks, those venues that have suffered 90 percent revenue loss over the year before will be the first to be able to apply for these grants.

So we in Congress don't want to let the music die, and we don't want that to happen to any of our other places of culture in America either. That is why over the last month or so, we have worked with the museums and with the zoos, and I want to especially thank Senator SCHUMER for his work on that, as well as Senator BLUNT and many others who worked with us—as well as the movie theaters.

We wanted to make sure that if we expanded our coalition, that we didn't hurt the originals, which were these small, small theaters and small music venues across the country. We did not do that, because this new program will be a lifeline for small entertainment venues across the country, such as First Avenue and the Bluestem Amphitheater in Moorehead, MN.

It will also help the millions of Americans who work behind the scenes and who have been sidelined, from the engineers and truckdrivers to the ticket takers and the designers and the spot operators. It will help revive the local economies of neighborhoods and small towns across this Nation.

It is not every day that a coalition sticks together from beginning to end, that they kept with their original purpose, haven't been picked off, haven't gotten into infighting, but this group did it. Maybe it is because so many Americans at home right now cherish music and entertainment and that part of America like they have never done because they are watching things alone. They are listening to concerts by themselves. They are listening to them with their iPhones, or they are listening to them on their computers, and it is not quite the same.

We also know that all of these artists don't exactly get a big boost up by themselves with huge funding when they first start out. So many of them start out at these little venues—a country music band playing at the Bluestem Amphitheater; a little local theater troupe trying out a new play in Lanesboro, MN. They can't do it without these venues.

So today we celebrate the fact that we held together. Not only are we passing this bill as a part of this package, we actually brought in friends, and we brought in partners, and we made it an even bigger deal than it was to begin with.

So as I began by quoting the great Bob Dylan from Minnesota, I will end. He once said:

Well, I sing by night, wander by day.
I'm on the road and it looks like I'm here to stay.

Finally, we are reaching out to this group of employees and these businesses and saying: We want you to be here to stay.

So thank you to Save Our Stages and to all of our colleagues who worked so hard on this, and special thanks to my friend Senator CORNYN. Again, when we did this, we didn't know if we would be able to mount this grassroots effort, but it happened because artists and

fans just wouldn't give up. So thank you very much.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I would like to thank, first of all, the preceding speaker, Senator KLOBUCHAR, for her efforts to help those venues in those entertainment areas that at this point have been left out. We certainly have some of those in West Virginia, and I am pleased to say that the coronavirus package we are putting together today will help those folks and hopefully get them over the hump.

Before I begin, I would like to wish everybody, as much as they can, a happy holiday and a joyful new year. Turning the page of 2020 is something I think we are all pretty anxious to do. Sometimes it seems like the longest year, and sometimes it seems like the shortest year, but it definitely seems like "Groundhog Day" a lot of the year.

I am very pleased that we have this relief package in front of us. While I am glad an agreement has been reached, we certainly should have done this earlier and could have done this earlier. We have been working since July to deliver targeted additional relief through efforts such as we put forward in the CARES Act, and it has been voted down twice—once in September and once in October.

To date, we, the Republicans, have offered targeted relief legislation, voted in favor of enhanced employment benefits, more money for our schools, which would have been great to have had in early September and should have had in early September. We voted in favor of stand-alone emergency funding for the Paycheck Protection Program, which we know is exceedingly important, and more dollars for vaccines and testing so that we could get the great news of the vaccine that we see coming forward out to everybody in this country. We offered all kinds of ideas to the other side, but they blocked it—all of it. I am glad to say that after all this, we have finally joined together, realizing that, yes, a deal is better than no deal.

Last week, unfortunately, a very good friend of mine passed away after battling coronavirus. At one point in her life, she was a small business owner. I thought so much about her over the last several weeks. I thought, what would she say if she knew that months ago, as a small business owner, we could have delivered the same help to her that we are delivering today.

We have to do better by the people we represent. It is disappointing that politics has gotten in the way. It is disappointing and, quite frankly, insulting, in my view, when I see the Speaker of the House admitting to holding out on this relief because she thought it would be beneficial politically in the end. We can do much better than this.

I am also a proud member of the Appropriations Committee. We have

worked hard to get these funds and resources where they are most needed, especially in a year like this one. But due to delays, critically needed resources to combat the opioid epidemic have had to wait; investments to improve broadband have had to wait; research dollars into Alzheimer's have had to wait; and the list goes on. This is so frustrating to me, as it should be to every American, and I know they are frustrated because they tell us they are.

But here now, we were able to include funds for things that are important to me in my State of West Virginia, such as fossil energy research, our universities, and the many Federal facilities that call West Virginia home.

I encourage my colleagues to support this important legislation that reflects our Nation's priorities and funds the government, which is our responsibility as Members of Congress.

Within the Omnibus appropriations act is the fiscal year 2021 Homeland Security appropriations bill. I chair that subcommittee, and it is with great pride that I can report to the American people and to West Virginians that this title invests billions of dollars to protect our homeland.

We maintain our commitment to border security through a border wall system to include physical barriers and enhanced technologies.

We avoided a drastic cut to our cyber security capabilities that we see we need now more than ever after all of the reports and the vicious cyber attack that we uncovered that has been launched against many of those in our country, not just the government but the private sector as well.

We continue our commitment to use every resource at our disposal in the effort to prevent those opioids that are killing our people. We see overdoses going up and deaths from overdoses going up during this pandemic. We tried to get the resources to our Homeland Security folks to prevent those drugs from entering into this country at all.

The men and women at the Department of Homeland Security work constantly against threats both old and new, traditional and emerging, and deserve the support this legislation gives them.

So while this is great news in the end, I will repeat what I said earlier, and that is, Congress can do better. We could have done this earlier, and it should have been done earlier. So there is no reason we should be standing here several days before Christmas discussing the items that were ready to go several months ago, but we are where we are. As we turn the page gleefully into 2021, I think we should all pledge to one another and to the country that we will do better, that we will work better with each other and prevent politics from infecting every decision that could positively impact so many people in this country.

Lastly, I give a hat tip to my friend, whom I will miss seeing and who was a

great friend to our family, a longtime friend of our family. Godspeed. I know she is dancing up there with her mom and dad because they loved to dance.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, Republicans like to mock modern monetary theory—the idea that government can print money with impunity and that government can spend whatever it wants without the need to tax. Modern monetary theory is basically the Dick Cheney “deficits don't matter” crowd, trussed up with a new fancy title.

Most Republicans rightly lampoon this quackery; that is, when they are not practicing the quackery themselves. Today, many of these same Republicans will vote for a bill that makes modern monetary theory look like child's play in comparison. The monster spending bill presented today is not just a “deficits don't matter” disaster, it is everything Republicans say they don't believe in.

This bill is free money for everyone. Proponents don't care if you are fully employed or own your own house or own your own business. “Free money for everyone,” they cry. And yet, if free money were the answer and if money really grew on trees, why not give more free money? Why not give it out all the time? Why stop at \$600 a person? Why not \$1,000? Why not \$2,000? Maybe these new free-money Republicans should join the “everybody gets a guaranteed income” caucus. Why not \$20,000 a year for everybody? Why not \$30,000? If we can print up money with impunity, why not do it?

The Treasury could just keep printing the money; that is, until someone points out that the Emperor has no clothes and that the dollar no longer has value. To so-called conservatives who are quick to identify the socialism of Democrats, if you vote for this spending monstrosity, you are no better. When you vote to pass out free money, you lose your soul, and you abandon forever any semblance of moral or fiscal integrity.

So the next time you see Republicans in high moral dudgeon, claiming and complaining about spending of Democrats and socialism, remind them—remind them if they supported this monstrous bill, that really the difference between the parties is less Adam Smith versus Marx and more Marx versus Engels.

How bad is our fiscal situation? Well, the Federal Government brought in \$3.3 trillion last year and spent \$6.6 trillion. The deficit last year, a record-busting \$3.3 trillion. If you are looking for more COVID bailout money, we don't have any. The coffers are bare. We have no rainy day fund. We have no savings account. Congress has spent all the money long ago.

The economic damage from this pandemic is not the reason for this run-

away spending. This spending has been going on for decades. Every year, even before we get to all the extra COVID-free money, we have been spending \$1 trillion we don't have.

Today's money is gone, so Congress is spending tomorrow's money. The spending chart is a red line of red ink that goes on forever. When we talk about spending tomorrow's money, it is not just the money that we need next month. It is the money we might need in a decade. It is the money we will need in one, two, three generations from now—for national defense and for infrastructure. This is the money that your children and your grandchildren will pay back with interest.

The deficit doubling and tripling—under George Bush, it went from \$5 trillion to \$10 trillion. Under President Obama, it went from \$10 trillion to \$20 trillion. We are now at \$27 trillion, but we are adding it at \$1 trillion a year before we get to this COVID budget-busting bailout.

Every tax-paying American already owes over \$136,000, and they are staring at projections into the future that show no end. We are \$27 trillion in debt today. How do we expect a child to have the economic opportunity when this crushing debt is their inheritance from Congress? The numbers are mind-boggling. It is hard to conceive of what \$1 billion is, much less \$1 trillion.

How big is \$1 billion? Well, a billion seconds ago was 1988 and Reagan was President. A billion minutes ago, Jesus walked the shore of the Sea of Galilee. A billion hours ago, man still lived in caves. But \$1 billion ago, was just 80 minutes ago—\$1 billion ago, at the rate Congress spends money, was just 80 minutes ago.

All of this should be setting off alarm bells. But the only alarm bells in Congress are sounding the alarm for more spending and more debt. No cuts, no offsets, no pay-fors, and no prioritization. Just print it up. Print up more money and give it out to everybody because it is free money. Come and get yours while the getting is good. But it leads to a mountain of debt. Spend all this money and leave the future to figure itself out.

John Maynard Keynes was once asked: What about the long run?

He said: In the short run, you can make a stimulus. You can print money, and you can give it to everybody.

And Maynard Keynes, his response was: In the long run, we will all be dead; no concern for the future, only for the immediate.

Our budget deficit for 2020 was \$3.3 trillion, but this new spending package will also give us another \$2 trillion in the next fiscal year. By refusing to acknowledge the debt crisis, we are only hastening the day of economic reckoning.

Total debt was 55 percent of GDP just 20 years ago. Today, it is 128 percent of GDP. So our annual or our total debt is more than our GDP—128 percent of our GDP. The World Bank estimates there